Summary of Congregation's Challenges from Open Meeting 4/6/2025

In a meeting chaired by the COM*, including Rev. Denis and 27 participants, people were asked to share their opinion about the greatest issues our congregation is currently facing. At the end of the meeting, participants were asked to select what they felt was the most important issue.

Next steps: the COM was asked to summarize the meeting and prepare a one page insert for the next order of service. The COM was asked to host a follow-up meeting in one month.

Top issue endorsed: There is a disconnect between the RE families and the rest of the congregation. Are these families represented, being heard? What was the rationale for changing from the practice of having the children start "upstairs"? A consistent concern underlying many of these issues was the need for honoring our covenant with each other – treating each other with respect, ensuring we feel safe enough to "speak up". A clear process for conflict resolution.

Second selected issue: Finances. The congregation needs to be aware of the financial situation. Related to this – need for expertise re: fundraising (and a suggestion to bring back the auction).

Third selected issue: Need for more transparency re: how the congregation operates. This includes education about our committees and their responsibilities, how to connect/volunteer (suggestion to bring back the "committee fair"). Possible review/reorganization of committees, organizational structure.

Other issues:

Need to engage men (And in general, understand why people are not engaged, why some leave the congregation).

Leadership development: we need people who want to serve on the Board, particularly in leadership positions. Need for more volunteers in general; need to appreciate current volunteers.

Thanks to each of you for your participation!

*COM includes: Sarah Dinklage, Barbara Nowicki, Donna Caldwell, Rev. Denis